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Mount Rainier National Park News Release

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Mount Rainier Biologist Receives National Park Service Natural Resource Stewardship

Barbara Samora, Biologist at Mount Rainier National Park is the recipient of the "Director's Award for Natural Resource Management." Samora is a 30 year veteran of the National Park Service and has worked at Mount Rainier National Park for the past 18 years. Samora is recognized for her outstanding achievements in understanding, protecting, and managing park natural resources. She manages three main program areas; the Atmospheric Program, Aquatic Program, and the Social Science Program. "Barbara's familiarity and experience with park issues are invaluable to park management. Her institutional knowledge of park resource issues is unsurpassed. She has made numerous contributions as principle author, planning leader or team member on numerous planning efforts," said Dave Uberuaga, Superintendent.

"Barbara is a professional biologist with skills and expertise in aquatics and physical science. She has a working knowledge of the role of social science and its integration into park operations. Barbara has demonstrated her capability to integrate and interpret ecological processes and resource management actions to park managers and the public," said supervisor Roger Andrascik, Chief, Natural and Cultural Resources. Andrascik said, "The park staff and her peers respect her for her interdisciplinary knowledge and dedication to the NPS and its resources."

Each year the National Park Service recognizes employees for outstanding work in the field of park natural resources. The 2005 Director's Awards for Natural Resource Stewardship single out six NPS employees for their leadership and work on issues such as air and water quality monitoring, social science, coral reef monitoring, grizzly bear research, mixed- grass prairie restoration, planning and integrating resource stewardship into maintenance operations.

Though the awards celebrate individual achievements, the award winners call attention to teamwork, professionalism, and a shared sense of purpose among park staff – critical qualities in the successful management of national parks.

"I'm always amazed at the motivation and selflessness of those who work in National Parks to protect and restore them, and to facilitate public understanding and enjoyment of their nation's natural and cultural heritage," said Michael Soukup, National Park Service Associate Director for Natural Resource Stewardship and Science. "Each year we call for nominations from the field and have them judged by their peers to recognize the most outstanding efforts. It's certainly a privilege to present these awards. "

Other winners were:



Jason Lott, Integrated Resource Program Manager, Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park, the “Trish Patterson Student Conservation Association Award for Natural Resource Management in a Small Park.”

Bruce Hancock, Chief of Maintenance, Whitman Mission National Historic Site, Walla Walla, WA, the “Director’s Excellence in Natural Resource Stewardship through Maintenance.”

Woody Smeck, Superintendent, Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area, the “Director’s Award for Superintendent of the Year for Natural Resource Stewardship.”

Charles Schwartz, Leader, Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team, USGS- BRD Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center, Bozeman, MT, the “Director’s Award for Natural Resource Research.”

Jeff Miller, Fisheries Biologist, South Florida/Caribbean Inventorying and Monitoring Network, the “Professional Excellence in Natural Resources Award.”

The Director's 2005 awards will be presented to recipients September 20- 23 at the 33rd Annual Natural Areas Conference to be held in Flagstaff, Arizona. Each award recipient will receive a \$2,000 monetary award, a framed award certificate and a limited edition bronze bison sculpture created by the artist Chris Schiller.

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